Westwood Historical Society Newsletter

Post Office Box 2575, Westwood, Massachusetts 02090

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Lura S. Provost, President and Editor

April 13, 1999
The Story of Dedham Pottery

The Westwood Historical Society will hear James Kaufman, the Dedham Historical Society curator for Dedham and Chelsea Keramic Pottery. The meeting will be held on April 13, 1999 at 8 PM at the Dedham Historical Society, 612 High Street, Dedham enabling everyone to see the exhibits in their collection. Mr. Kaufman has collected and researched Dedham Pottery since the time he moved to Dedham 14 years ago. He is the founder and author of Dedham Pottery Collectors' Newsletter, as well as numerous newspaper and magazine articles on the topic. Currently Kaufman is working on a book on the subject and welcomes additional information. He would enjoy looking at any unusual pieces. Dedham Pottery is familiar to most in the Westwood-Dedham area with its cobalt blue-painted rabbit border on a gray crackle-glaze and was developed in 1891 by Hugh Cornwall Robertson. The antique appearance, imitating ancient Asian pottery, appeals to collectors.

Call Lura Provost at 326-1543 for directions or to arrange a carpool. The meeting will begin at 8 PM followed by refreshments served by Claire Bogrette and her committee. The public is welcome at all Westwood Historical Society meetings.

Watch us on Cable

Our February program "Steam Trains and Gravel" was filmed by Cablevision and aired on the local Channel 14. Watch for reruns!

May 22, 1999
House and Garden Tour

The 4th Annual House and Garden Tour to benefit the Fisher School Fund features antique houses, a home with an oriental flair, and one originally a school, as well as gardens of horticultural merit and design. The League of Fine Artists exhibition will be at the Masonic Hall again this year, with a portion of the sales benefiting the Fisher School Fund.

The Luncheon will be catered by the Blue Hills Vocational School as in other years and will be at the First Parish Church Parish Hall. A variety of painted wooden items along with our now famous handmade birdhouses will be for sale at the Boutique, also at the First Parish Church Hall.

Tickets will be available at Decor and More, Eaton's Apothecary, The Perfect Present, and Swan's Way. Tickets are $15 for the Tour or $20 for the Tour and Luncheon. Tickets for the luncheon must be purchased prior to May 18th. Tickets sold on the day of the Tour are $18 and can be purchased at the shops or at the First Parish Church Hall. The Tour is held rain or shine, so think SUN!

Save Saturday, May 22nd for the Tour to benefit the Fisher School restoration. Plan to attend with your friends, or if you would like to assist on the day of the tour, or if you would like to donate to the Boutique or Plant Sale, call Lura Provost at 326-1543 or Joan Swann at 769-1670. For the plant sale all plants are welcome: annuals, perennials, shrubs, houseplants.

June 12, 1999
Annual Meeting and Trip

The Shirley-Eustis House in Roxbury will be the location of our Annual Meeting to be held on Saturday, June 12th. The House is a splendid Georgian country house, built in 1747 for William Shirley, Royal Governor of Massachusetts. Later, partially renovated in the federal style, the home was purchased by post-Revolutionary Governor William Eustis in 1819. The interior includes French Empire furnishings.

Prior to our visit at the House, we will visit the First Church at Roxbury which was built in 1809 in the federal style on the site of the first parish building of 1632. John Eliot founded the early parish as a missionary among the Indians and was known for translating the Bible into the Algonkian language. The church is the cornerstone of the John Eliot Square District comprising 19 buildings of 18th and 19th architectual styles.

Also on our trip we will visit the Forest Hills Cemetery which has many important types of monuments showing the development of funerary art.

The Historical Society is privileged that Jonathan Fairbanks, a Trustee at the Shirley-Eustis House, plans to accompany us on the tour.

Meet at the Westwood High School parking lot at 11:45 AM. The bus leaves at 12 noon. Cost is $ 14. per person. Mail your check to P. O. Box 2575, Westwood, MA 02090.

Blooming Daffodils

Many thanks again to the Rotary Club of Westwood who planted the daffodils at the Fisher School under the leadership of Hank DeAngelis. Their sunny blooms hasten the arrival of spring.

Annual Dues /Membership

We who are involved with the functioning of the Westwood Historical Society sincerely appreciate your support through membership dues. The Society, with approximately 250 members, is a charitable and educational organization receiving no state or federal funds. Consequently your dues and donations allow us to do the work of the Society as stewards of our heritage and history.

Tax deductible annual dues for the fiscal year May 1, 1999 to April 30, 2000 are $15 for a single membership and $25 for a family. Out of this money, $2 and $4, respectively, are set aside for the conservation of artifacts and manuscripts in the Society's collection. Once we move into our new home at the Fisher School, the needs of the collection will be assessed and the conservation of items will become even more important.

For those who wish to support the Society's work to a greater extent, we offer Contributing Memberships at $50 and Sustaining Memberships at $100. Dues are payable to the Westwood Historical Society, Inc. and mailed to P. O. Box 2575, Westwood, MA 02090.

Other News

Joan Swann and I have been researching other Historical Society's facilities, especially to learn about the best layout and shelving for a collection, catalogue systems, policies and procedures, and so forth. As moving day approaches, we are working to be ready to receive the collection from the various locations but principally from Barbara Beale's home and the High School storage room.

Congratulations to Bob Knox

Bob is the Historical Society's new Treasurer. We welcome him aboard!

Fisher School Restoration Update

The interior work on the Fisher School is now progressing on schedule. Insulation has been installed in all the ceilings and walls, interior plastering has been completed, both heating systems now are operational, the electrical wiring has been set in place, and the plumbing is set and ready for the fixtures. Our Vice President, Ralph Buonopane, has been working with the contractors, Jack Anderson, Peter Killelea, Bill Jacobs, Relco Electric and Suburban Heating to keep the restoration on track and to adhere to our plans.

The major interior preservation and restoration work now is underway. The blackboards, chalktrays, wood trim, and mouldings are being restored. The large unfaded sample of wallpaper, uncovered behind the wooden air vent, is an historically unique artifact which is documentable as original to the Fisher School. Working with Mr. Richard Nylander of SPNEA, we will preserve the original sample and have the wallpaper reproduced in its original pattern after final verification from the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution. Reproductions of schoolhouse light fixtures of the early 1900s period are planned for ceiling lighting in the schoolroom. Painting the woodwork and wainscoting in the original colors will be accomplished with the help of Ms. Linda DesRoches who also analyzed and identified the exterior paint colors. When completed, the Society will have a unique piece of New England history which all of us are waiting to share with the community.

If you see activity at the site, feel free to stop and watch the progress.

Fisher School Fund

Historical Society members and the community, individuals and businesses, have been so very supportive by donating generously to the Fisher School Fund and attending the House and Garden Tours, our major fundraisers. The response to our December appeal has been outstanding. The difference between funds already raised and the final estimate for completion is approximately $25,000. Applications have been made to various foundations and institutions seeking grants. If you haven't already contributed, you can help finish the job by sending in a fully tax deductible donation.

Kindly mail to: Fisher School Fund, P. O. Box 2575, Westwood, MA 02090. Many, many thanks.

The Olde Shoppe

It's not too late to enjoy a Fisher School mug with the drawing of the schoolhouse. The mugs are perfect as a gift selling for $6 each or four for $20.

Our boxed pen and ink notecards, $8 for 12 different scenes drawn by Jane Ryan Sugrue, are just the right size for your notes.

West Dedham and Westwood: 300 Years, the history of Westwood by Marjory Fenerty which was republished for Westwood's Centennial in 1997 sells for $25. All of these items are available at The Perfect Present, Decor and More, and Swans Way on High Street, as well as the Fox Hill Village Store.

The Society also sells a 14" x 20" reprint of an 1898 aerial view of Westwood for $15 which is available at Decor and More and Swan's Way, or by contacting Jackie Tauber at 320-8953.

In Memoriam

It is with sadness that I report the death of our dear friend Margaret Philbrick on February 19th, 1999. Margaret was active in the Historical Society during her earlier years in Westwood as well as recently. Margaret's friends at the Historical Society express their condolences to her family, especially Otis and Gina. We will miss her.

An accomplished artist and illustrator, Margaret exhibited throughout the country and in several foreign countries. She won many awards and has permanent collections in the Library of Congress as well as other important museums. Her designs of Wedgwood Commemorative Plates are particularly noted. Her media included oil, watercolor, etching, collograph, and serigraph. She illustrated West Dedham and Westwood 300 Years, both Marjory Fenerty's original edition in 1972 and the recent Centennial edition adding a drawing of the Fisher School.

Curator's Corner

Friends of the Historical Society continue to add interesting material to the archives and collection. Our Curator, Barbara Beale, has recently received the following gifts. Thank you to all of the donors.

At our February meeting Richard Brown brought us 2 Dedham Town Reports, 1869 and 1883; a plan of Fellowship Farm, 1912; a photograph of 765 High Street, c. 1880 (at that time the house belonged to Moses Richardson, whose daughter Annie was the first Librarian); a picture of the car barn and waiting room of the Norfolk Central Street Railway which also shows two cars with three crew members; a picture of a postcard, showing the entrance to Westwood Park in Islington, c. 1920.

Mrs. Harold Cella and her daughter, Nancy Bloomfield, have given us a copy of a charming photograph of the Peter G. Allendorf family, taken in 1910 showing Mr. and Mrs. Allendorf and their three children. Mr. Allendorf was the owner of the variety store near the entrance to Westwood Park. We are fortunate also to have a taped interview with Mrs. Cella (the former Esthea Allendorf) in which she talks about growing up in Islington.

Arsen Charles brought us a framed copy of the Dedham section of a Norfolk County map dated 1858.

Recently, the Westwood Public Library gave us an 1851 Dedham map, which has topographical details. Since it has been water damaged, it is a candidate for conservation.

Westwood Historical Society Calendar

13 Apr 1999	**"The Story of Dedham Pottery" Jim Kaufman 8 PM**	**Dedham Historical Society 612 High Street Dedham**
22 May 1999	**House and Garden Tour 10 - 4**	**Rain or Shine**
12 Jun 1999	**Annual Meeting and Trip Depart 12 Noon Westwood High School**	**Shirley-Eustis House, Roxbury First Church in Roxbury Forest Hills Cemetery**